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# YORK Quarterly-Meeting,

Ninth Month, 1773.

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**A**lthough the following pertinent and interesting Advices were only address'd, by the Author, to the Youth of the Meeting where he resides, yet appearing to be properly adapted to general Service, they are, with much Affection, earnestly recommended to the serious Perusal, and close Attention, of the Youth in this County.





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# TO THE YOUTH OF NORWICH MEETING..

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DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,

**L**ET me request your attention to the following lines. The subject nearly concerns you. Despise not the counsel of One who has often looked upon you with tender regard, and been secretly engaged on your account, that the many gracious visitations of Divine love and mercy to you might be affectionately received, and duly prized by you. If you sincerely embrace them in humble resignation, and faithful obedience, the power of Truth will preserve you, and the fresh springs of life increase, and establish you in the saving knowledge of God; but if you choose the ways of the world, and walk after the sight of your eyes, and the imaginations of your hearts, rejecting the gentle drawings and inward reproofs of his holy Spirit, you not only forsake your own mercies for lying vanities, but also put a high indignity

and affront upon the Sovereign Majesty, the great Judge of the quick and dead, who is every where a present Observer of our conduct, and too jealous of his honour to suffer, without displeasure, the froward will of the Creature to have the preference in any, to his just and holy will; and who will not force those into felicity who refuse his gracious offers.

Unless you take up your daily cross to selfish indulgences, and carnal gratifications, you cannot be the disciples of Christ, nor inherit those enjoyments which are of a divine and permanent nature. “If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons, or children, of God.” Rom. viii. To follow the Lamb, whithersoever he leads, is the only way to true and lasting happiness, notwithstanding the deceitful flatteries of a degenerate world, and the delusive persuasions of corrupt nature, to the contrary.

The subtil enemy of your peace begins with fair shews, and plausible temptations, in things which, to inexperienced minds, appear of small concern. He knows, should he at once attempt you with manifest iniquities, and

impieties, it would shock your tenderneſs, and defeat his deſtructive intentions. He therefore ſeeks firſt to enſnare you, by ſecretly operating upon the complacency of your natural tempers, and your averſion to give diſguſt, by putting forward and heightening your natural deſires, rather to pleaſe than profit yourſelves and others, in your deportment and converſe ; and alſo to betray you into an ill-grounded ſhame of godly converſation, and pious walking, and a breach of the due adherence to thoſe diſtinguiſhing peculiarities which the Truth has led its faithful followers into, and placed as an exterior hedge of preſervation about them. Theſe the blind world calls affected ſingularities, and clowniſh abſurdities, and ſtyles the diſregard and diſuſe of them an innocent freedom, and prudent demeanour. Thus the inſidious adverſary leads firſt into partial compliances, and proceeds by making every ſucceeding ſtep, towards a captivating conformity, appear trivial, and of no conſequence. By this means he deludes the weak and unwary, gradually to aſſimilate with the world, in language; in dreſs, in behaviour, in the ſuperfluity and folly of its modes and faſhions, in its corrupt aſſociations, and poiſonous diverſions, the natural tendency of all which, is to entangle, darken, and debaſe the mind, and by alienating it from the light and life of Chriſt, to render it ſo unguarded as to make way for the introduction of unſuitable

connections, unhappy marriages, and in brief, every kind of corruption and misery.

Be entreated therefore to beware, in time, of every approach towards a false liberty in the smallest matters, lest they prove introductions to greater. Guard strictly against every thing that would lead you to slight the tender touches and convictions of Divine Grace. Withdraw from alluring objects. To tamper at all with temptations, is to lose ground. It is vain to imagine you can go what length you please, and no further; that you may securely temporize to a certain degree, or to just such a pleasing point of compliance as you are now tempted to, in behaviour, dress, and language, in order to appear genteel, candid, well bred, intelligent, polite, and to escape the disagreeable sensations of false shame, and the reflections of being stupid, mulish, and Quaker-like. This leads into liberty, but it is the liberty of the flesh, which is in reality the bondage of corruption.

Content not yourselves with a birth in the Society; but seek to secure a birthright in the Truth; without which the first will not avail you in the sight of God. Let the Spirit of Truth govern your inclinations, for whatever inclination you give your affection to, or passionately espouse, will prove your master. In



Indulge not an eager curiosity; it led Dinah to dishonour, and became the ruin of a city. Be cautious of your company; for that will affect both your manners and character, and eventually your future state. Humour not the carnal mind in dressing your mortal, changeable, uncertain bodies, beyond what truth warrants, and decency requires; for more is not decoration, but disguise, which in the ultimate runs into deformity, and administers offence to him who resisteth the proud, but increaseth grace to the humble. Flatter not the vanity of those who look for a plural address to themselves, whilst they treat their Maker in the singular number; as if Infinite Omnipotence was less, or less worthy than the poor creature, whose very breath and being is not one moment at his own disposal.

I would beseech you, who are conscious that you have been already turned aside, or stumbled at the cross, proceed no further, but fly to the great Redeemer, who so wonderfully condescended from the heights of immortal Glory, took a painful humanity upon him, and bled for us, that he might bring us to celestial enjoyments, and for that end trod the most thorny paths, and left us the fairest example of humility, meekness, resignation, purity, and the most perfect plainness in every respect. Slight not the pattern he set, but follow it, for his

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bleſſed ſake, and the ſecurity of your own happineſs, ſhun all the gilded baits, the fair ſeeming careſſes of a deluſive world, in ſmall matters as well as great, for they are all one in nature, though different in degree. Beware of the little foxes; they crop the tender buddings of the vine of life. Studiouſly avoid all friendships, flatteries, formal viſits, idle paſtimes, and parties of pleaſure, which in any meaſure lead out of the fear of God, divert you from daily attention upon him, and indiſpoſe you for humble walking with him.

Who, in their proper ſenſes, would loſe an eternal manſion in the heavenly Jeruſalem, and paradise of God, for the paltry pleaſures and ſilly ſatisfactions which muſt ſhortly end in everlaſting bitterneſs? Shall the decking of theſe perſhable bodies, the vanity of this uncertain life, the gratification of ſenſe, the lure of idle associates, or the apprehenſion of deriſion from perſons ignorant of the virtue and power of truth, or unfaithful to it, have greater impreſſion with you, than the love of Him that made you, the favour of Him that ſuſtains you, and a ſtate of immutable bleſſedneſs with him in the realms of eternal light and glory? Make not ſo miſerable a choice and preference, but practically adopt this apoſtolic advice, “ Be not con-  
“ formed to this world; but be ye transformed  
“ by the renewing of your minds, that ye may

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“ prove what is that good and acceptable, and  
“ perfect will of God.” Rom. xii.

To behold blooming youth renouncing those temptations, and appearances of present advantage, which captivate the generality of their contemporaries, for the sake of that glorious truth which leads, under the cross, to the crown immortal, cannot fail of being acceptable to God and good men. “ I rejoiced greatly,” saith the good Apostle, “ that I found of thy  
“ children walking in Truth.” “ I have no  
“ greater joy than to hear that my children walk  
“ in Truth.”



J. P.

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